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DOWNTOWN, PARK SLOPE & BAY RIDGE EDITIONS

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BRIDGE IS OUT!

Summer repairs cause fear and loathing in Heights

By Gary Bulso

for The Brooklyn Paper

The Brooklyn Bridge is getting the facelift—but Brooklyn Heights is getting the worry lines.

A mammoth renovation project that begins soon will close the Manhattan-bound lanes of the historic span at least 24 weekends and many weeknights, creating intense congestion as cars jam the Manhattan Bridge, the closest alternative.

"The traffic will increase tremendously," predicted Capt. Vanessa Knight, an executive officer at the 84th Precinct.

It'll all start in June, when the Department of Transportation begins a \$500-million project that includes a new paint job, deck resurfacing, and rehabilitation and widening of the bridge's ramps and approaches—a project that promises to reduce congestion (eventually) for the 100,000 drivers who cross the span every day.

But until then, drivers will be detoured to the already packed intersection of Flatbush Avenue and Tillary Street to go to the Manhattan Bridge—which is expected to get 80 percent of the diverted See **BRIDGE** on page 10



Expect lots of congestion when the Manhattan-bound lanes of the Brooklyn Bridge are closed week-ends and nights, starting in June.

But amore is in!

Lovers' locks, an Italian custom, are littering the great Bridge

By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

Canadians Ryan Shudra and Dez Ross have a love that cannot be broken, like the locks that others are clipping to the Brooklyn Bridge (photo right).

A pop cultural phenomenon that has turned an Italian bridge into a lock smelter's paradise has jumped across the Atlantic and is threatening to cover the Brooklyn Bridge in lovers' padlocks.

The tradition of securing a symbol of amore to a bridge—and tossing the keys into the river below—was popularized in a 1992 book by sugary Italian novelist Federico Moccia, but the tradition didn't take off until the

movie version of "Tre Metri Sopra il Cielo" came out in 2004.

That's when Roman authorities suddenly had to deal with thousands of lovers clipping all manner of Master, Kryptonite and Medco locks to the Ponte Mivio—and throwing the keys into the muddy Tiber.

Well, guess what, Brooklynites: the tradition is here.

The good news is that the locks haven't quite caught on to an extreme, but there are dozens of them fastened to



benches, supports, pillars and extraneous pieces of metal. Most of the locks have dates on them, plus the names of the lovers who swore their undying love.

See **LOCKS** on page 10



Atlantic Yards holdout-no-more Daniel Goldstein with his wife Shabnam Merchant and their daughter Sita Dorothy.

Just in it for the money?

Ratner exec say yes but Daniel Goldstein says no

By Stephen Brown

The Brooklyn Paper

Forest City Ratner officials abandoned their diplomatic talk on Tuesday to explicitly portray Daniel Goldstein, who ended his long holdout in the Atlantic Yards footprint for \$3 million last week, as an opportunist looking to make as much money as possible.

Countering Goldstein's own statements that the sticking point over last week's negotiations was his refusal to sign away his right to criticize the project in the future, Forest City Ratner Executive Vice President MaryAnne Gilmarin told us that last week's final negotiations did not bog down due to Goldstein's refusal to sign a "gag order," but simply over how much money he could get out of developer Bruce Ratner.

"The sticking point was how much money he wanted," Gilmarin said.

A source close to negotiations reinforced that claim by saying that Goldstein had actually pushed for \$5 million at one point during negotiations.

Goldstein and his lawyer, Mi-

WHAT IS HIS LEGACY?
SEE PAGE 2

chael Rikon, said that both claims were patently false.

The money amount was settled pretty quickly," Goldstein said. "The sticking point that led to nearly four hours of discussions was Ratner's insistent desire to bind me to some sort of gag order."

"Apparently, taking my home and raising my neighborhood wasn't enough for them," he added.

The lawyer backed up his client.

"The money was never the problem," said Rikon. "For [Gilmarin] to say that is outrageous."

In the wake of this she-said, they-said story, Ratner is moving forward with construction of his Barclays Center arena, which he hopes to open during the 2012-13 basketball season. Meanwhile, Goldstein is hastily stowing away his belongings so he can move out

See **MONEY** on page 10

FAULTY TOWERS?

Tenants say condo plan at historic Cobble Hill building is gentrification

By Gary Bulso

for The Brooklyn Paper

A historic Cobble Hill apartment complex built a century ago to house the working class is now on the track to luxury.

The state attorney general's office has approved the Hudson Companies' plan to convert the Cobble Hill Towers—built as an experiment in philanthropy by Alfred T. White in 1879—into condominiums, a plan that calls for any vacated apartments to be sold at market prices.

Tenants in the landmark building will be offered the chance to buy their apartments at insider prices such as \$230,000 for a studio and

\$595,000 for a three-bedroom apartment. Owners would then be free to set their own re-sale prices, though residents in the rent-stabilized apartments will not see any changes if they want to go on renting.

Still, the plan will result in the building's transformation from moderate-income rentals to luxury condos. As a result, it has frightened residents, who are unsure whether they'll be able to buy, even at the insider prices.

"It's ridiculous," said longtime resident Cindy Nuralah. "Some people are going to have to pay more money [to buy their place]."

We had a very satisfying day," said proud owner Jon Crawford-Phillips, who actually conducted a stakeout in Red Hook on the 12-day search for his best friend Thompy approached its dramatic climax.

It was very therapeutic pulling down all the missing dog posters we had put up."

The horror began on April 13 when Crawford-Phillips spotted Thompy to a hook outside the



A major developer wants to renovate the historic Cobble Hill Towers along Hicks Street, but rent-stabilized tenants, like Victoria Garcia, see it as a back door to gentrification.

THOMPY'S BACK!

By Thomas Tracy

for The Brooklyn Paper

A beloved Cocker Spaniel who was swiped from outside a Boerum Hill deli last week was back with his family on Sunday after being stolen and sold on the street like hot watch.

"We had a very satisfying day," said proud owner Jon Crawford-Phillips, who actually conducted a stakeout in Red Hook on the 12-day search for his best friend Thompy approached its dramatic climax.

It was very therapeutic pulling down all the missing dog posters we had put up."

The horror began on April 13 when Crawford-Phillips spotted Thompy to a hook outside the

See **THOMPY** on page 10

Walmart inches closer

Locals ready to fight retail giant at Jamaica Bay site

By Stephen Witt

for The Brooklyn Paper

Residents are hailing reports that Walmart is looking for its first Brooklyn location—even as critics of the big-box store are preparing to fight back the retail Goliath famous for its "low, low prices" and, some say, low, low wages.

Under the rumored deal, Walmart would lease space at the planned Gateway II shopping center at Jamaica Bay off Shore Parkway at Erskine Street. The City Council already approved the plans for the shopping center, meaning

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BROOKLYN'S BIG BOX BATTLE

Walmart could move in by simply signing a lease.

"People are very happy about it," said Marie Purnell, former president of the Spring Creek Towers Tenants Association, which is across the street from the Walmart. "It was all the talk at last night's Democratic Club meeting."

But labor unions, local elected officials

and community organizers are vowing to marshal their forces to keep the controversial big-box chain out of the city.

"They will have the fight of their lives if they try to bring Walmart out here. It's not going to happen," said Councilman Charles Barron (D-Carroll). "No one exploits workers more than Walmart. To exploit workers the way they do is unconscionable."

Barron, however, may have a tough time finding support among the 15,000 residents in Spring Creek Towers—many

See **WALMART** on page 10

Slope 'too rich' for these kids

Budget woes mean after-school cuts in 'affluent' neighborhoods

By Stephen Witt

and Claire Glass

for The Brooklyn Paper

The city is shuttering two much-needed after-school programs in Park Slope and a summer program in Fort Greene because the neighborhoods aren't poor enough to justify their existence.

As a result, several hundred students who use the Out of School Time programs at PS 295 and PS 282 in Park Slope, along with the summer program at IS 113 in Fort Greene will be left to fend for themselves this summer and in the 2010-11 school year.

"Taking this program away is dangerous," said Traci Tucker as she picked up her 6-year-old son, Ryan,

from PS 282 on Sixth Avenue. "This is for single parents, or families where both parents work, like ours."

But Park Slope and Fort Greene aren't poor enough, according to Department of Youth and Development spokesman Ryan Dodge, who said that the programs can continue only in the most-needed neighborhoods due to budget cuts.

"[We] examined our entire portfolio and sought to preserve programs that serve the needs of working parents ... in high-need areas," he said.

As a result, the city will cut 33 after-school programs, with nine in Brooklyn getting the axe. Additionally, 31 summer programs will be cut citywide, including 11 in Brooklyn.



Armando Thomas, who uses an after-school program in Fort Greene, will lose it this summer.

In all, the savings will be \$7.5 million. But that's too little money to save, considering the importance of these programs, said Charles Anderson, who runs both

See **CUTS** on page 10

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THE YARDS FIGHT — IT'S OVER

Da Goldstein's legacy: Noble activist or sellout?

By Stephen Brown

The Brooklyn Paper

Is Daniel Goldstein a sell-out, or an activist who made the best of an untenable situation?

That's the question that all Atlantic Yards followers are wrestling with in the wake of Goldstein's stunning \$3-million settlement with their nemesis, the developer Bruce Ratner. One side says he was a hero who risked everything—including the Pacific Street home where he lives with his wife and small child—to halt a money-hungry developer.

The other side says that Goldstein's settlement—which was bigger than anyone else who lived in the Yards footprint—vindicates their perception that his "principled stand" was merely a bargaining chip.

This sentiment can be read in the comments section of every story written about Goldstein's settlement—though only Bertha Lewis of the community organizing group ACORN has thus far gone on the record to address what some see as the negative side of his legacy.

"What incensed me so much about Daniel over the years [was his] distortion of the facts—really denigrating folks in the community. Saying you don't understand the project, you've been duped, hoodwinked," said Lewis, whose controversial group has supported the project for its promise of affordable housing.

But it's not just longtime supporters who have questioned Goldstein's

NEWS ANALYSIS

decision last week. Even the Atlantic Yards Report, which has been one of the most thorough critics of the project, noted that Goldstein's settlement also requires him to withdraw from all litigation—meaning that it is now less likely that some lingering legal issues, such as the revised 25-year buildout of the project, will ever be considered in a courtroom.

Since last Wednesday's front-page settlement, Goldstein has sought to define his own legacy, re-focusing attention away from the naysayers and back onto the movement he led something that he deftly managed as spokesman of the opposition group, Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn.

"We've done a lot of what the media should have been doing—what well established good-government groups should have done," Goldstein said. "Watchdogging minute details of an antimated process. Every false statement, exaggeration and broken promise has been exposed."

So, what concrete accomplishments can Goldstein and his Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn actually point to?

"We have convinced nearly all good people of good will that the project is a sham and a poster child



Daniel Goldstein at an anti-Yards rally in 2007.

for the wrong way to develop cities," Goldstein said. "We shined a bright light on the way eminent domain is abused in New York State to the point where there is now a legislative effort ... to reform the state's laws."

Opponents like Goldstein can also take credit for delaying the project, but the delay ended up playing a role in the firing of architect Frank Gehry, whose ambitious design was one of the project's original selling points—and whose departure, even the developer has admitted, has made the project worse.

Ultimately, it is a stretch to call Goldstein's opposition to the proj-

ect a victory—ground has already been broken and demolition crews are getting off the bench and taking off their warm-up suits to tear down his home as early as next month.

But his dissent, along with those that stood beside him, helped illuminate a project that has been criticized numerous times by numerous judges for its lack of transparency.

His decision to not face a physical eviction only avoided a colorful moment for the media, but not much else. Goldstein was left with few favorable options: he could have chosen to fight on and face an eviction date as soon as mid-May and less money for his apartment, or take a more generous settlement. Either way, the state was going to remain his landlord—it took title to his apartment in March.

So what is Daniel Goldstein's legacy? He lost his home in a state-sponsored land grab by a billionaire—but he also got \$3 million and retained his right to criticize such alleged abuses of eminent domain.

He didn't stop the project—and played a role in making it arguably worse.

But Daniel Goldstein didn't choose this fight—it chose him when state development officials knocked on his condo door one day and said, "We are taking your apartment for a basketball arena."

He said, "No." And like him or not, that was a principled stand—one that happened to pay off in the end.

A farewell to Freddy's

Watering hole near Yards closes for good on Friday

By Stephen Brown

The Brooklyn Paper

Hipsters, old-timers, and barflies were poised to raise their glasses at Freddy's Bar for the last time on Friday—making a final toast to a Prohibition-era watering hole, but one man won't be there: the man whose name is on the awning.

Freddy Chadderton, who sold the bar to its current owner in 1996, lives on Long Island—but at age 82, he isn't looking back at his salad days.

"I had a good run," he told us this week.

But Chadderton is one of the few people connected with this bar that isn't crying at least a bit in his beer this week, recalling a neighborhood joint that apparently has to be torn down so that Bruce Ratner can build a basketball arena.

It was indeed a good run. Long before it was Freddy's Bar, and even before Adolf Hitler got his much-deserved conception, the barroom at Dean Street and Sixth Avenue served as a saloon for top dogs at the Spalding ball plant, a soon-to-be-demolished building nearby.

Back then, according to David Sheets, a chronicler of Freddy's lore who lived next-door to the bar from 1997 until this year—the watering hole did not bear any resemblance to the present day.

"During the Prohibition era, the building looked like a bunker. But inside, Spalding exudes were drinking on the fly—and sometimes in plain sight."

"It's often said it was a speakeasy," said Sheets. "That's misleading—it was a place to entertain clients."



In recent years, Freddy's was the epicenter of the anti-Atlantic Yards movement.

Around World War II—the date is unclear—Willy Henderson bought the three-story building on Dean Street and rebranded the bar. Some called the place, "The White Horse." Others knew it simply as "Henderson's."

This version of the watering hole was a neighborhood joint—complete with a small bowling alley in the basement.

In his later years, Henderson, a heavy smoker, still hung around, barking at the newcomers in his bar through his cancer kazoos.

In 1961, Henderson hired Johnny "Seat Covers" Severino as bartender—a job that he held until 1994. Seat Covers moved into an apartment above the bar and stayed there until he died in 2005.

One of Severino's regulars was a 78th Precinct beat cop, the now-immortal Freddy Chadderton.

In 1975, Chadderton retired from the force and bought the bar and building from Henderson.

"In the matter of a day, Freddy not only became [Seat Covers'] boss, but his landlord!" Sheets said, who spent countless hours with Severino.

It was during the Freddy's era that the bar became a hang out for the boys in blue and firefighters. Employees over at the Daily News building between Sixth and Carlton avenues on Dean Street now cosmo called Newswalk—also came by.

As a possible result, the bar became rowdy.

"At the time, Dean between Flatbush and Sixth avenues became quite a hotbed of prostitution," said Sheets. "They were biggest clients, the cops! And the firemen, too."

Cops would hold meetings in what is now the back room, sitting in old church pews that Freddy had brought in. Seat Covers would cook cheap bar food while also serving drinks.

Freddy used to entertain himself by "making it rain," 1970s style, his wife, Dorothy recalled. She said Freddy would sit their eldest son beside a fan on top of a phone booth in the corner, hand him a wad of cash and let it blow all over the bar—an amusement that elicited plenty of robotic curse words from Henderson, who still hung around.

In 1996, Freddy was getting old, the Daily News had

Yost's hands, it began evolving into the bar that will close this week. Seat Covers still made his way downstairs for his morning "naps." Every day he would double-park his 1970 black Mercury out front after running errands and lament the terrible parking situation on Dean Street while he drank.

Then in 2003, came the news about the Atlantic Yards, and that Bruce Ratner was looking to buy everyone's property in the footprint. Over the next seven years, the buildings nearby would be emptied, and Freddy's would go from being a neighborhood dive to a destination, even for people as far away as Manhattan.

Some regulars bawled at the newcomers, but they kept the place afloat.

"In a way, I liked the fact that there were hipsters populating the place at 3 or 4 in the morning," Sheets said. "It provided a sense of security that someone was there."



Former bartender Johnny "Seat Covers" Severino.

—it didn't look abandoned, which in fact it was."

But while the hipsters partied on the weekends, Yards opponents gathered there to organize protests, paint banners, and parse legal documents.

Last week, Yost finally took an offer from Ratner, and will be moving to a new location at Fourth Avenue and Union Street.

"For me, those rooms at Freddy's, and up and down the block, there are ghosts—voices echoing all over the place," Sheets said. "For lots of people to have that taken away—it's not the end of the world—but it hurts. It's very emotional for a lot of people. It's not just me."

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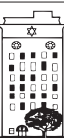
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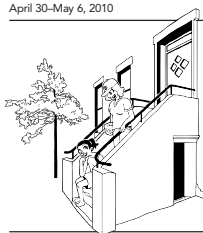
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THE SLOPE

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

PARK SLOPE



Colleen Ford is one of the new servers at Gorilla Coffee in Park Slope, which reopened this week.

'Gorilla' war has ended

Coffee shop reopens — with a whole new staff!

By Stephen Brown
The Brooklyn Paper

Park Slopes can once again get their caffeine fix at Gorilla Coffee, which reopened on Monday after a stunning walkout by the entire staff two weeks ago forced the Fifth Avenue java joint to suddenly shut down.

Lines weren't out the door as usual this morning, but the coffee was just as strong.

"People in the neighborhood are still finding out that we are open," said Carol McLaughlin, one of the owners of the cafe. But that was about all McLaughlin had to say regarding her just-reopened business, which became mired in controversy two weeks ago.

"I really don't want to talk about this," McLaughlin said. "We're trying to move forward."

But there is no doubt McLaughlin and her co-owner, Darleen Scherer, were left scrambling after the abrupt walk-out of all of their workers on April 11. Scherer had said that she was completely taken by surprise by the employee exodus, which occurred after tensions boiled over between the staff and ownership.

The two-week delay in reopening can likely be attributed to the high-end coffee culture in Park Slope, which requires a level of skill and knowledge that goes beyond one lump or two. These days, a barista's duties aren't just pulling a few levers and steaming some cappuccinos — training is required.

The manager on duty at the cafe, which is at Park Place, confirmed this, saying she and the other new employees had just been through "a very rigorous training process."

But the manager, Caitlin Geoghan, knew what she was getting into.

"I knew Gorilla by reputation," she said.

There is little doubt that Gorilla's reputation has taken a hit, however. The open letter issued by the former staff — and hung, Martin Luther-style, on the front door — described a "perpetually malicious, hostile, and demeaning work environment" that was "unhealthy" and "unworkable."

At the center of this meltdown was McLaughlin, who was characterized as an authoritarian drill sergeant/boss, who demanded the utmost care from her legion of caffeine artists.

What remains to be seen is if the Park Slope residents will shun the cafe now that all its dirty laundry has been aired in public. Previous labor unrest in the neighborhood, such as the stunning revelations regarding underpaid deliverymen, resulted in no discernible change in behavior.

DOWNTOWN

Danny Glover steals the show

By Shavanna Abruzzo
The Brooklyn Paper

Hollywood heavyweight and social activist Danny Glover starred in another role when he came to Brooklyn through poetry, storytelling, theater, music and dance.

Glover shared the bill with recording artist and music producer David Rudder during an evening of cocktails and conversation at the Atlantic Avenue nightclub to raise money for the Possibilities Foundation.

Glover shines in his new role as emcee at the Deity Lounge.

CONEY ISLAND

Marty's minions back amphitheater

Controversial 'Potato Chip' moves through community board panel

By Joe Maniscalco
The Brooklyn Paper

A Community Board 13 panel finally voted last week to back Borough President Markowitz's controversial bid for a giddy \$64-million amphitheater inside Asner Levy Seaside Park — ending a year of silence on the issue that brought out accusations that the members are just shells for the Bep.

Until last Wednesday night, Community Board 13 had declined to weigh in on the widely reviled project, claiming that it has no role in the approval process for the concert venue. But after a long-overdue meeting

of the board's Parks and Recreation Committee, several panel members pushed a last-minute resolution asking the board to oppose the amphitheater.

That resolution was deadlocked 5-5 — but two abstentions were counted as "no" votes, and the resolution was defeated.

"I feel sick," said committee member Lillie Reich. But that nauseous feeling was not shared by people who support Markowitz's plan to transform the sleepy seaside park on Surf Avenue between Ocean Parkway and W. Fifth Street into a new concert venue

CARROLL GARDENS

Verge of collapse

City sues cement magnate Quadrozzi over decrepit Henry Street buildings

By Gary Bulso
The Brooklyn Paper

A Cobble Hill homeowner has allowed two landmarked properties to fall apart for nearly a decade — and now the buildings are in danger of collapse, the city charged in a bombshell lawsuit this week.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission slapped concrete magnate John Quadrozzi Jr. with the suit on April 5, arguing that despite repeated attempts, the buildings — a three-story Italianate rowhouse and adjoining carriage house at Henry and Congress Streets — continue to remain "in a state of significant and progressive deterioration and extreme disrepair."

Court papers describe a classic example of a landlord's failure to maintain a historic structure: The rowhouse, built in 1852, looks like a "before" picture for an episode of "This Old House," boasting large cracks, missing bricks, holes and absent windows.

Meanwhile, the carriage house has its own set of problems, including collapsed roof beams and two holes in the roof.

Both buildings are in danger of collapse, the city stated in its suit — a rare time when

the Landmarks agency has taken such a battle all the way to court.

"Over the past five years, the commission has repeatedly attempted to persuade Mr. Quadrozzi to repair the two landmarked buildings to avoid litigation," said Elizabeth Thomas, a Law Department spokeswoman. "Initiating a lawsuit is the only recourse left to compel him to make the legally required repairs, including collapsed roof beams and two holes in the roof."

The commission is seeking immediate repairs and fines of \$5,000 a day — posted after March 2009. Quadrozzi said he remains

committed to repairing the properties, and blamed the city for dragging its feet in getting permits approved. He said Landmarks was more concerned with exterior work than the significant structural repairs — like putting up a new structural wall — which he knew needed to get done first.

Moreover, Quadrozzi wondered if the city's on-going problems with contractors would lead to a lawsuit against him. Earlier this year, the city took action against Scarno, claiming that the architect designed

apartments and buildings that played fast and loose with city zoning laws.

Quadrozzi terminated his business relationship with Scarno last year, but now said that his current issue with the city "makes me feel that all my troubles were because the city was just against my [choice of] architect," he said.

Scarno refused to comment, but the city said that Quadrozzi was raising a straw man — the problems on Henry Street are Quadrozzi's own.

Even an array of violations at the site since 2001, totaling roughly \$25,000 — did little to persuade the homeowner, who lives in another home on the block.

These were for conditions noted at the site, be it a sidewalk shed, defective masonry or defective brickwork," said Buildings spokeswoman Carly Sullivan. "They are not related to the architect hired by the owner."

Neighbors hailed the city suit.

"We've been disappointed that he has literally let it deteriorate," said Roy Sloane, president of the Cobble Hill Association.

Quadrozzi said work is proceeding on schedule, and he hopes to move into the properties — purchased from Long Island College Hospital in 2000 — at the end of the year. Renovations are costing about \$1 million, he said.

"I'm a guy that bought a building and wants to fix it. Instead of helping me, the city wants to kill me," he said.

PAVE's 138 kids. The building, in fact, could accommodate 198 more students, city officials said.

More concerning for city officials is that the education panel decision, which keeps PAVE inside PS 15 through the 2012-13 school year, can be extended.

If PAVE doesn't secure its own home by June 2013, the city "will re-evaluate the available space in the [PS 15] building to determine whether sufficient space exists for PAVE to remain," the Department of Education said in a statement.

Parents of PAVE students insist that the charter school doesn't want to take over PS 15's building, which is between Richards and Van Brunt streets.

"The co-location of PAVE and PS 15 should be something that enriches both schools," said Jeanette De Jesus, whose daughter is in the second grade at PAVE. "Our intention is not to take away from PS 15. Our intention is to have a space for us to give Red Hook kids a choice."

But PAVE's founder and executive director, Spencer Robertson, thinks that his school will leave PS 15 on schedule.

"We are in contract" to purchase a warehouse at 722 Henry St. off Mill Street, he told us.

The cost of the site and renovations are estimated at \$39 million. The city is covering two-thirds of that cost and PAVE is raising the remainder through private donations, Robertson said.

Opponents believe the 8,000-seat venue will play a detrimental role, given that it will consume virtually all of the active recreation space in the park, and amplified music might disturb residents of nearby buildings and congenialists in the two adjacent synagogues.

"I am far developing the park, but I am not for the project as it stands now," concluded committee member Todd Dobrin.

Even if it had passed, the board's resolution would only have bought the Parks Department is actively looking for a concert promoter to transform the sleepy seaside park on Surf Avenue between Ocean Parkway and W. Fifth Street into a new concert venue

defeated.

"I feel sick," said committee member Lillie Reich. But that nauseous feeling was not shared by people who support Markowitz's plan to transform the sleepy seaside park on Surf Avenue between Ocean Parkway and W. Fifth Street into a new concert venue



The city has sued the owner of this building on Henry Street in Cobble Hill for allegedly letting it fall apart.

RED HOOK

PAVE-ing the way

City lets controversial charter school stay in PS 15 for three more years



Parents and teachers from the PAVE Academy were pleased by last Tuesday night's vote.

By Michele De Meglio
The Brooklyn Paper

A controversial charter school will be allowed to use space inside a cramped Red Hook public school for at least three more years, thanks to a city vote last Tuesday.

Defying the wishes of parents at PS 15, the Panel for Education Policy voted overwhelmingly to allow the K-12 charter school to remain inside the Sullivan Street building.

Parents have used the city to get the charter school out of their building, saying it is too small to accommodate the needs of all students. When it opened two years ago, PAVE was supposed to move out by this June.

"My classroom is literally the next classroom that will be taken away," said Patty Isoldi, a fifth grade teacher at PS 15.

Teachers say that space is so limited that "the occupational therapist has to share the library," added PS 15 reading teacher Marie Sirotniak. "The other occupational therapist has to share the computer room."

The city says there is more than enough room in the 73-percent capacity PS 15 building for both the public school's 390 students and

on par with the Westbury Music Fair on Long Island.

"When I look at this plan, I see improvements for the park," Gene Ritter said. "If I thought this was going to destroy the park, I'd be with you."

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

April 30-May 6, 2010

Snob trek

Our ride with the writer also known as 'Bike Snob'

By Stephen Brown
The Brooklyn Paper

Turns out, the "Bike Snob" is anything but. For more than two years, the Snob, the alter-ego of Kensington resident Eben Weiss, hid behind a blogger's anonymity, making biting observations of the bike scene while also poking fun at its sometimes-elitist and always-insular culture.

Now, with a new attitude—oh, and a book that he's trying to sell—Weiss has a mission: to "systematically and mercilessly realign the world of cycling" and bring it into the mainstream.

To achieve this goal, Weiss's book, "Bike Snob," offers two sections that will be of great interest to any rider familiar with Brooklyn's mean streets: a survival guide for coping with careless drivers, as well as a run-down of all types of bike riders, from hipsters on fixies to meat-heads on tricked-out racing bikes.

In the helpful section, "Why is everyone trying to kill me?" Weiss delves into the terrifying experience of riding a bike in the city, offering some clever words of caution—namely how to best cope with road rage while being stuck on an exceptionally vulnerable vehicle.

"As much as I hate, 'Get out of the road!'" Weiss writes, "I'd rather have someone yell that at me than have some-

one almost kill me because he didn't even know I was there. At least being yelled at means I matter."

The Bike Snob is filled with such pragmatic advice. Indeed, I ended up on the wrong end of the Snob's razor-sharp wit when I attempted to justify riding against traffic in Prospect Park as a shortcut—or "bike salmon," as Weiss calls it.

"Why not ride around the park [with traffic]? It's a beautiful day! Or ride in the street!" Weiss fired back. "All is chaos if you salmon. You see cars drive through the park—they don't drive against traffic. They don't complain, 'Oh, what am I supposed to do, drive around the whole park?'"

Aside from that one evincing take-down, Weiss was quite agreeable—not elitist in the least. In fact, I was relieved to hear him say I didn't even fit into any of the categories of cyclists that he defines in his book.

But one of the species of cyclists he examines was on display in Prospect Park the day we went for a ride: the "Contraption Captains," who mount odd variations of the bicycle in which they lean back and pedal in front of them.

"[The bike] places the rider in an odd position with his feet kicking at the air like he's defending himself from an attacking eagle," he said.



Roll with it: Eben Weiss, best known as "the Bike Snob," shows off his form near Prospect Park.

Weiss similarly characterizes another familiar cycling sight—the "Urban Cyclist" who generally dwells in Williamsburg. As Weiss describes them: "The Urban Cyclist is one of the very few groups of cyclists among whom cigarette smoking is not acceptable, but considered 'cool,' which is sort of like being really into performance cars but driving around with rags shoved up your tailpipe."

For now, Weiss's goal is to demystify bike riding, but it was only last month that the Bike Snob emerged from the shadows himself.

"It gets gimmicky after a while—being the anonymous, wisecracking blogger," said Weiss. "It was great in the beginning, because I could just write and people wouldn't picture the author. They could enjoy it more—it spoke for itself."

But now Weiss's witty take on the bike world has been put in book form and he'll be hopping around the country to promote it. And after that come the inevitable charges that he has sold out.

"Are you kidding? Look at me! I have no money! How could I have sold out?" Weiss said.

BOOKS

"Bike Snob" Eben Weiss will be reading at Powerhouse Arena (37 Main St. between Water and Front streets in DUMBO, (718) 466-5049) on May 1 at 2 p.m.



Solid gold drama

Great acting brings Strindberg to life



Tom Burke and Owen Teale in the BAM's production of "Creditors."

Revenge is rarely as gripping, vicious and, yes, fun, as it is on stage at the BAM Harvey in August Strindberg's "Creditors"—a thoroughly modern take on the battle of the sexes.

Though written in 1888 by let's face it, the sometimes-insane Swedish Modernist, "Creditors"

The Butcher of Flatbush Ave. Extension

retains its freshness and insight into male-female relations that must have been shocking more

than a century ago. There's no fat in this brisk, 90-minute war, directed by the actor, Alan Rickman. The play starts in the middle of a deep conversation between a young artist, Adolph (Tom Burke) and an older man, Gustav (Owen Teale), with Adolph in mid-

See **GOLD** on page 7

NIGHTLIFE

Hey nude

Fans of the Beatles and burlesque — this is your ticket to ride.

Inspired by David Bowie glam rock tributes, a new show in Williamsburg is all about the Fab Four — and the teasing performance art known as burlesque.

The two, according to the show's creator, Calamity Chang, are a natural fit.

"The Beatles were transgressors in a time of political unrest much like now," said Chang, aka "Yoko Chang," who hosts the monthly show at Public Assembly, next up on May 10. "Through burlesque, which is a transgressive art form in itself, it seemed like the perfect event that can reach more than just an insular community."

John, Paul, Ringo and George are channeled by the tribute band Ticket to Ride, who back up the performers as they strip and sing along to songs pulled from the Beatles' extensive canon, such as the raunchy "Why Don't We Do It In The Road?"

A natural fit, indeed. Beatles Burlesque at Public Assembly (70 N. 3rd St. between Wythe and Kent avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 384-4586), May 10 at 9 p.m. Tickets \$10. For info, visit www.beatlesburlesque.com. — Meredith Deliso

DINING

Pie squared

A new bake shop in Gowanus has a fairly tale name—but there's nothing magic believe about the quality.

At Four and Twenty Blackbirds, sisters Melissa and Emily Elend dream up classic pies with a twist, like their apple and pear with rosewater.

"Everything has a twist," said Melissa Elsen. "We wanted to make our pies fresh and interesting."

The two sisters were practically born to make pies, growing up helping their grandmother bake pies for their small-town family restaurant in South Dakota.

The duo still focuses on the handmade, homemade wisdom of their grandmother, but their pies have since grown a little more sophisticated.

"She used lard in her pie crusts," said Melissa Elsen. "Lard makes a great crust, but we think butter tastes a lot better."

If pie isn't your thing, there are still more than a few reasons to head to Gowanus. Namely, gashes, house-made breakfast items, Irving Farm Coffee and a gorgeous, sunny space that already began to attract neighborhood laptops.

But if it is pie you crave, get there early—the sisters are often sold out by mid-afternoon. You know what they say: the early bird gets the pie.

Four & Twenty Blackbirds (439 Third Ave. at Eighth Street in Gowanus, (718) 499-2917). For info, visit www.fourandtwentyblackbirds.com.

— Kristen V. Brown

DINING

Verde veritas

Look, there are lots of restaurants on Smith Street—and many of them are great—but none of them serve us a plate of seared sashimi-grade tuna over beans and herbs as good as Verde did last week.

Chef Dino Castri (pictured) is behind the stove at Cono Moreno's new venture, and though the menu features a wide range of antipasti, salads, pastas and meat dishes (including sautéed spaghetti with sea urchin and scallops), the tomato con purée di legume (\$27.50) is the standout—just charred enough on the outside to create a contrast to the almost buttery raw tuna inside.

And when it's consumed in such a delightful setting—a former Laundromat that's been converted into a sophisticated, warmly lit room with a lively bar scene and a quiet garden—it tastes even better.

Also, don't miss that flourless chocolate cake with sea salt for dessert.

Verde (216 Smith St. between Baltic and Butler streets in Carroll Gardens, (718) 222-1525).

— Gersh Kuntzman

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STORIES IN STONE

SUNDAY, MAY 2, 2010: 1:00PM AT THE HISTORIC CHAPEL AT GREEN-WOOD

What is the meaning of clasped hands or a winged hourglass depicted on a gravestone or monument at Green-Wood Cemetery?

Photographer-writer Douglas Keister, one of America's leading authorities on cemetery symbolism, knows. Author of 15 books, Keister will interpret the language of mortuary symbolism as discussed in his classic cemetery book, *Stories in Stone—A Field Guide to Symbolism and Iconography*, at this special book talk, which includes a PowerPoint presentation, a question and answer session and a book signing. Keister will also share insights from his latest book, *Forever L.A.—A Field Guide to Los Angeles Cemeteries and Their Residents*.

After the book signing, join Keister for a trolley tour that will provide opportunities to see, discuss and interpret the vivid and fascinating symbolic world at Green-Wood.

The book talk is **FREE** (suggested donation \$5). The trolley tour is **\$10** for Historic Fund members/\$20 for non-members. Reservations are recommended. Space is limited. Reserve your ticket online today at green-wood.com/toursewer or call 718.768.7300. Join our email list at green-wood.com/signup for updates.

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HERE TO GO

EDITORS' PICKS

SUNDAY May 2

House party
Brooklyn voyeurs, here's your first chance to see how the other half lives—the other half that lives better than you do, that is. Today's Fort Greene house tour starts with a behind-the-scenes tour of BAM's main theater before moving on to local artists' studios. It's a tour of the city's most beautiful neighborhoods.

Noon–5 pm, Fort Greene House Tour meets at Lafayette Avenue and Fulton Street, (718) 875-1855. Tickets are \$20. For info, visit www.his-housefortgreene.org/house-tour-2010.

MONDAY May 3

Dirty job

When Ian Cheney takes his truck for a spin, he keeps more than spades and fertilizer in the back—he brings his whole garden with him. The Red Hook filmmaker, who grows crops out of the back of his 1968 Dodge pickup truck, will talk about his adventures in urban farming as part of the Open City Dialogue lecture series at Pete's Candy Store. One thing is certain: his radishes are unleaded.

7:30 pm, Ian Cheney at Pete's Candy Store 209 Lorimer St. near Richardson Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302-3770. For info, visit www.petescandystore.com.

WEDNESDAY May 5

Name dropping
Park Slope's over-achieving elementary school, PS 107, has done it again—this time snagging big name memoirists, Alexandra Styron and Bliss Broyard (pictured) to dish about their high-profile dads (depressive William Styron and sort-of black man Anatole Broyard). When these gals air the dirty laundry, it's definitely for the third-graders!

7:30 pm, Alexandra Styron and Bliss Broyard at PS 107 (301 Eighth Ave. at 13th Street in Park Slope, (718) 499-2054). Tickets are \$10.

FRIDAY May 7

Necking

You're more likely to see the names Dior, Schiaparelli and Lanvin in fashion magazines, but they'll also be at the Brooklyn Museum for the first large-scale exhibition from its enormous fashion collection in 20 years. Our favorite piece is Elsa Schiaparelli's famous "Insect Necktie"—a collaboration with Surrealist Salvador Dali. Don't wear it on the subway!

10 am–6 pm, "American High Style" at the Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Crown Heights, (718) 638-5000). Admission \$10.

SATURDAY May 8

Ashing a lot
Some Euro ash nearly spoiled the "Euro-trash." But now that air travel has returned, the Brooklynite Gallery is showing off two influential street artists: Norwegian stencil artist Dolk and Polish muralist M-City. We like Dolk, whose monochromatic pieces often feature something yellow—a nod to Andy Warhol's banana. That reminds us to order a daiquiri.

7 pm, "Eurotrash" at Brooklynite Gallery (334 Malcolm X Blvd. between Decatur and Bantbridge streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (347) 405-0976). For info, visit www.brooklynitegallery.com.

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

FRI, APRIL 30

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL: Annual blooming of the amazing Japanese cherry trees. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Pkwy. in Crown Heights, (718) 623-7220). www.bbkg.org.

THEATER: "THE VOIL OR THE GUIDED CRADLE": A play about torture. \$18. 8 pm. The Brick (375 Metropolitan Ave. between Union Avenue and Lorimer Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302-3770). www.bricktheater.com.

ANNUAL CHARTER DAY CONVOCATION: Recognizing students and educators at the college. Free. 3–5 pm. St. Francis College (180 Remsen St. between Court and Clinton streets in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 489-5200).

DANCE: "RUN UP WALLS": Dancers dodge cinder blocks, fly through the air and, as the name suggests, run up walls in the Stree company's latest. \$20 (adults), \$10 (kids). 7 pm. STREEB Lab for Action Mechanics (51 N. First St. between Kent and Wythe avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 381-6671). www.streeb.org.

CLASSICAL CONCERT: With Steven Beck on harpsichord and piano. 5:35 (3:30 seniors, \$15 students). 8 pm. Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street and Furman Street in DUMBO, (718) 624-2083). www.bargemusic.org.

COMEDY NIGHT: Hosted by Nick Turner (College Humor) and Jason Sauer (DC Comedy Festival). Free. 8 pm. Cocola (64 Greenpoint Ave. between Franklin and West streets in Greenpoint, (917) 807-6045). www.mispect.com/cocola64.

MUSIC: ANTIETAM: \$10. 8 pm. Union Hall (702 Union St. at Fifth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 638-4400). www.unionhall.org.

CLASSICAL CONCERT: OMNI ENSEMBLE: Works by Bach, Debussy, Stravinsky and others. \$10. 8 pm. Brooklyn Conservatory of Music (58 Seventh Ave. between St. Johns and Lincoln places in Park Slope, (718) 622-3300). www.brooklynconservatory.org.

DANCE: "THANKS FOR NOTHING": Performances by Aligal and Part of AIR Festival. \$15 (\$12 in advance). 8 pm. Brooklyn Arts Exchange (421 First Ave. at Eighth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-0018). www.brooklynarts.org.

MUSIC: MARIO FARR: \$5. 8:30 pm. Jalopy (315 Columbia St. between Hamilton Avenue and Woodhull Street in Columbia Street Waterfront, (718) 395-3214). www.jalopy.biz.

MUSIC: HOWARD FISHERMAN: Folk and jazz. 10 pm. Barbes (376 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 965-9177). www.barbesbrooklyn.com.

MUSIC: "ELECTRODYNAMICS": An evening of whacked-out instrument-



Take me home: The Spring Food and Craft Market comes to the Brooklyn Lyceum May 1 and 2.

SAT, MAY 1

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL: See Friday, April 30.

SPRING FLING: Enjoy great shopping, music, and food, kids activities such as face painting, arts and crafts, and more. Free. 10 am–4 pm. Public School 2 (223 Adelphi St. between Willoughby and DuSable avenues in Clinton Hill, (718) 303-4307). [www.ps202.org](http://ps202.org).

PLANT SALE: Colorful annuals, perennials, and more. Free. 10 am–4 pm. Hoyt Street Association (101 Hoyt St. at Pacific Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 596-0449).

HEALTH: THIRD ANNUAL PTA RUN/WALK FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS: \$15. 10 am–1 pm. Barclay Fritchard Square (Prospect Park West at 15th Street in Park Slope, (718) 499-1000). www.brooklynpta.org.

PERFORMANCE

THEATER: "THE VOIL OR THE GUIDED CRADLE": 8 pm. See Friday, April 30.

URBAN DANCE WORKSHOP: The Educated Voices presents electric googie and break dance instruction. Free. 3 pm. Brooklyn Public Library Bed-Stuy branch (416 Franklin Ave. at Hancock Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (718) 415-3474).

ART: FIRST SATURDAYS: Including an eco-fair, music, dance, art, film and more. Free. 5–11 pm. Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638-5000). www.brooklynmuseum.org.

CIVIC CALENDAR

TUES, MAY 4
Community Education Council 15. Monthly meeting. CEC 15 office (131 Livingston St. between Bed Hook Lane and Smith Street in Cobble Hill, (718) 935-4267).

Workshop: Brooklyn-Queens Expressway trench enhancement study. 6:30 pm. Long Island College Hospital (337 Hicks St. near the corner of Atlantic Avenue in Cobble Hill, (718) 643-3027).

Community design workshop: Workshop to improve the pedestrian environment between Atlantic and Hamilton avenues. 6:30–8:30 pm. Long Island College Hospital (337 Hicks St., near Atlantic Avenue in Cobble Hill, (718) 643-3027). www.nyced.com.

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail Calendar@cnglobal.com.



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OUR OPINION

Marty's land grab

Say what you will about Borough President Markowitz's grotesquely expensive, open-space-devouring, dubious proposal for a \$64-million state-of-the-art amphitheater in Coney Island, but it is clear that it does not have the backing of the community that will be burdened by it.

Community Board 13, half of whose members are appointed by Markowitz, has refused to take a position, even as hundreds of neighbors of Asner Levy Park have protested repeatedly.

Their main issues are clear: Markowitz's glitzy amphitheater would absorb nearly all of the grass recreation area inside the park, replacing it with a concrete seating area and a raised lawn that is off limits to soccer or football players.

In addition, neighbors worry that amplified music will create a disturbance—especially on weekends when two area synagogues are filled.

Make no mistake, if city planners

Marty Markowitz is treating Asner Levy Park as his personal playground

were forced to listen to every little complaint, nothing would ever get built in this polyglot town.

But we believe that the opponents have good reason for objecting to Markowitz's legacy project.

Face it: There is no question that Markowitz is dumping this amphitheater in Asner Levy Park without a full vetting. The project is not undergoing the city's normal public review process, and the Parks Department will select an operator without public discussion.

Much of the project's \$64-million budget comes from a pool of capital construction money that Markowitz controls by fiat.

This lack of public oversight convinces us that Markowitz is treating

Asner Levy Park as his personal playground, something he feels entitled to do because he stages a summer concert series in the park's current bandshell.

Such nostalgia events typically feature aging rock or soul performers. But Markowitz believes that a new amphitheater, designed in a striking potpourri design by Grimshaw Architects, will allow him to draw better acts—the kind that perform at Jones Beach.

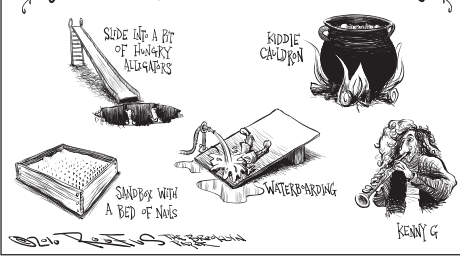
Markowitz says his amphitheater would be a vital piece of the city's plans for a revived amusement area in Coney Island. But that's not his call to make. A project of this magnitude and ramifications needs a proper review by the very agencies set up to oversee big land-use changes.

This is not a project that should merely come out of Marty Markowitz's fertile, Barnum-esque imagination and be dumped on a community.

ALL DRAWN OUT

You know the "burning orbs of death." Now, we present the ideas it best out!

REJECTED BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK PLAYGROUND ATTRACTIONS!



LETTERS

Food Coop hurls (organic) tomatoes at Barneys

To the editor,

Barneys' planned use of the word "co-op" in the name of its Atlantic Avenue store is a problem for the Park Slope Food Coop ("Co-op vs. co-op," April 19).

Send a letter

By e-mail:

newsroom@kingslocal.com

By mail: Letters, The Brooklyn Paper, One MetroTech Center, Suite 1001, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

All letters must be signed and include the writer's home address and phone number (only the writer's name and neighborhood will be published with the letter). Letters may be edited and will not be returned. The earlier in the week you send your letter, the better.

23). We have been in the process of educating Brooklynites for 37 years about the benefits and meaning of the word "co-op" as defined by the state Cooperative Corporations Law. The Park Slope Food Coop's misuse of the word dilutes this effort and effectively undermines our business model and, for lack of a better concept, "brand."

The Park Slope Food Coop is highly recognized in Brooklyn and is inextricably linked to the word and concept of co-op. For Barneys to use that same word in a manner that appears to be illegal under New York law and run a business that is not in any fashion reflective of the real meaning of the word harms our coopera-

tively owned and democratically run business.

The specific reference in Cooperative Corporations Law, Article 1, Section 3 (j) states, "The term 'cooperative,' 'cooperation' or any abbreviation, variation or similitude thereof, shall not be used as or in a name except by a corporation defined in this chapter. Any cooperative corporation may sue for an injunction against such prohibited use of the term."

A violation of this prohibition is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not more than \$500. Furthermore, Article 1, Section 2 states, "It is the declared policy of this state, as one means of improving the economic welfare of its people, particularly those who are producers, marketers or

consumers of food products, to encourage their effective organization in cooperative associations for the rendering of mutual help and service."

This doesn't describe Barneys' business model.

Joe Holtz

The writer is general manager of the Park Slope Food Coop.

Ratner's game

To the editor,

A church facility on a taxpayer-funded, or taxpayer-backed, facility of any kind is a sinister, mocking circumvention of the constitutional separation of church and state ("Church of Hoops," April 9).

Although this surely be per-

ceived by some as "progressive," it is, in truth, literally criminal. Let us be adult enough to recognize, once and for all, the cynical "playing" of the system by Bruce Ratner and those linked to him.

Burt Bloom, West Brighton

Pier pressure

To the editor,

I was on Pier 1 on one of the first cold rainy weekends after it opened, and a bunch of PS 8 parents wondered what those domes were ("Brooklyn Bridge Park's Pier pressure," April 8).

As the kids jumped over one of the domes, I saw the underside of the slick wet steel surface. One of the parents wondered how hot

they'd be in the sun at first glance, even on a cold rainy day. Overall, we thought the kiddie playground seemed more about abstract curves on design plans than the kids. The whirly Lego pegs were pretty lame too.

The domes are just one of the smaller examples of an abstract park design detached from community input and would-be users of the park. In this case, it could result in injury, but definitely in waste. Stock stainless steel items are a real future, never mind custom architectural shapes.

But the real waste—and perhaps a primary reason the park is hundreds of millions of dollars in cost, and needs to be built in phases—is all of the fill and earthwork required to build three-

story mountains on the waterfront that look as unnatural as a landfill on Jamaica Bay.

Landfills and berms are simply not natural features on river fronts, and I wonder why they were ever part of the design elements, and continue to be, in this economic crisis.

To save tens of millions of dollars in waste, there is still time to scrap the three-story berm planned to turn the length of Furman Street.

Instead, two affordable beach diamonds can be built, or some other active-use feature determined by the community stakeholders, not architects and development corporations.

Doug Biviano, Brooklyn Heights

The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

Teen Spirit's gap year graduation

Smartmon is relieved that Teen Spirit will not be attending Gap Year University next year. And it's not because he had a bad experience at GYU. Not at all. It was a great year and his coursework in the school of life included work at a warehouse in Red Hook, baby-sitting for a local boy, a road trip to the SXSW music festival in Austin, three days in New Orleans and (starting soon) more work at a warehouse in Red Hook.

Indeed, the year has been full of new experiences and adventures.

Teen Spirit even decided to become a vegetarian at GYU. "Too much fried food and ribs on his road trip" motivated him to adopt a more healthy and vegetable-filled diet. He left a note on the refrigerator when he got back: "Dear family: I have decided to become a vegetarian. Keep that in mind."

There were other milestones at GYU: Teen Spirit



By Louise Crawford

got his first passport, his first bank account and is learning to drive. He even applied for a job with the Census Bureau and had to register for Selective Service as a result.

At GYU, Teen Spirit concentrated on his songwriting and piano playing and he worked hard at recording an album full of new songs. He also had time to rehearse and perform with his band Bad Teeth and perform at places like the Silent Barn, Shea Stadium, The Tank and Vox Pop.

All things considered, GYU was everything Smartmon hoped it would be for Teen Spirit: a chance to do something other than school as a way to figure out what he wants to do with his life.

During his time at GYU, he even decided that he might want to study ancient history as well as music.

A lot of people warned Smartmon that a year off was a bad idea because Teen Spirit would never want to go to college. And you can't get a decent job without a college diploma, so getting off the academic track (even for one year) might be ruinous to the rest of his life.

But like everything else, he did it on his own timetable. In February, Teen Spirit applied to a few colleges with rolling admissions and devoted a great deal of time to writing his essay and dealing with the applications.

There were weeks at a time during the winter when the subject of college didn't come up and Smartmon found himself wondering if he had decided against college, that it wasn't something he wasn't ready to do.

But like everything else, he did it on his own timetable. In February, Teen Spirit applied to a few colleges with rolling admissions and devoted a great deal of time to writing his essay and dealing with the applications.

Once the applications were e-mailed to the various colleges, the waiting game began. To pass the time, Smartmon checked with his high school to make sure that his transcripts and recommendations were sent. She checked

the mail box hopefully every day.

Well, Teen Spirit was notified last week that he has been accepted to his first choice in Chicago. He didn't tell Smartmon right away, but when he did, he was pretty low key.

"Do you want to think about it?" Smartmon asked Teen Spirit.

"No, I'm going," he said. "You can send the deposit."

Smartmon was thrilled. Teen Spirit confirmed his admission and together they submitted the deposit. Teen Spirit's year at GYU is nearing an end, but he owes a lot to his alma mater.

GYU made him who he is today: a young man on his way to college.

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FAMILY CALENDAR

FRI, APRIL 30

11:30 am: Storytime with Emily. Movie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 923-9710). themovie-spot.com.

3:30 pm: Nina Zaragoza, Author of "Black Dog, Brown Dog," Free. Kaleidoscope (872 Third Ave. in Bay Ridge, (718) 491-2021). www.kaleidoscopecommunities.com.

5-7 pm: Teen writing workshop. Hosted by Ned Vizzini. Free. Barnes and Noble Park Slope (267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street in Park Slope, (718) 822-0064).

6:15 pm: Movie night. Movie Spot (see venue info above).

SAT, MAY 1

10:30 am: Story time for kids. Greenlight Bookstore (686 Fulton St. between South Portland Avenue and Fort Greene, (718) 246-0200). aboutgreenlightbrooklyn.blogspot.com.

11 am: Learn about insects and butterflies. Free. Prospect Park Wollman Park (Ocean Ave. at Parkside Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 965-8999). www.prospectpark.org.

12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: Puppet show. Jack and the Beanstalk. The classic children's story—with marionettes! 57 children, 58 adults. Puppetworks (320 Sixth Ave. at Fourth Street in Park Slope, (718) 965-3391). puppetworks.org.

1-4 pm: Arbor Day crafts, hands-on activities and exhibits. Free. Prospect Park Audubon Center (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 287-3400). www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

1-4 pm: Potato planting. Free. Lettuce Historic House (95 Prospect Park West at Fifth Street in Park Slope, (718) 789-2822). www.prospectpark.org.

1-3 pm: Nature crafts. Prospect Park Audubon Center (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 287-3400). www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

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BRIDGE CLOSED

Continued from page 1

The work is the first rebar for the bridge in two de-

cades, sparked in part by a 2007 collapse of bridge in Minneapolis, where 13 people died. City officials have

said that the bridge is structurally sound, but state inspectors rated components of the bridge as "poor" and in need of repair.

To start the project, agency contractors will blast away the existing coat of paint swaddling the span with protective wrap to prevent the spread of lead particles. The potentially hazardous work will be heavily monitored by local, state and federal agencies.

After the paint is removed, a new coffee-colored coat will be slathered along the entire 126-year-old structure. The agency calls the paint "Queensborough tan," an ironic moniker given the bridge was constructed a full 14 years before Queens officially became a borough.

The two-year paint job will be performed during the evenings and early mornings, when the bridge will be shut down to Manhattan-bound traffic, forcing weary travelers to seek out alternative East River crossings

— and flooding roads with additional traffic. Traffic lanes will be closed on weekdays, beginning at 11 p.m. and ending at 6 a.m., and on Saturdays, from midnight to 7 a.m., and on Sundays, from midnight to 9 a.m. During the day, expect single lane closures in each direction during off-peak hours. All six lanes will be open for rush hour.

During the four-year course of the overall project, the Manhattan-bound side of the bridge will be entirely off-limits for up to 24 weekends.

The end result will be smoother travel along the span, with fully repaired approach roadways and the creation of two lanes of free-flowing traffic at the Cadman Plaza exit, and in Manhattan, two lanes created from the southbound FDR drive onto the bridge.

But tomorrow's roadway downturn could be today's pain, residents said. "Parking is already horrible," said Heights dweller Kathleen Gates, who feared the area getting even more messy.

— with Tony Cella

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Tour the symbolism of Green-Wood Cemetery

What is the meaning of an inverted torch or winged hourglass depicted on a gravestone or monument at Green-Wood Cemetery? Photographer-writer Douglas Keister, one of America's leading authorities on cemetery symbolism, knows. Author of 35 books, Keister will interpret the language of mortuary symbolism as discussed in his classic cemetery book, "Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Symbolism and Iconography," at a special book talk, question-and-answer session and signing.

This is a big deal. As Sunbelt magazine has said, "Keister has done for cemetery exploration what Audubon did for birding."

After the signing, guests can join Keister and Green-Wood Historic Fund's Education and Outreach Coordinator Steven Estroff for a trolley tour that will provide opportunities to see, discuss and interpret the vivid and fascinating symbolic world at Green-Wood.

Douglas Keister at Green-Wood Cemetery [500 25th St. at Fifth Avenue in Sunset Park, (718) 768-7300]. The book talk is free (with a suggested \$5 donation); the trolley tour is \$10 for Historic Fund members and \$20 for non-members. Space is limited. Reserve your ticket online at www.green-woodcemetery.org or call.

Medical Center launches Facebook page

Our world is becoming more reliant on technology and the internet for communication and interaction among people of all ages. Parents call to text their child's cellphone that dinner is ready; professors email their students with class assignments; and friends, "chat" online and stay in touch in new and innovative ways. Social media is becoming more viable as a patient-interaction tool for healthcare. It therefore seems only natural for a well-known Brooklyn institution like Maimonides to join the Facebook world. Maimonides Medical Center's "family" theme is so strong it would seem invisibly written into the hospital name. The objective in joining Facebook is to translate that family theme to the online arena. Many former grateful patients of Maimonides are among its Facebook fans. Other fans include former, current and prospective Maimonides employees and we hope our residents and alumni will join soon. By having Maimonides on Facebook, we are encouraging community members to stay up to date on the latest news, and keep in touch with the Medical Center. The Maimonides Facebook page provides a good way for former patients to remain connected to the hospital that may have been their lives or delivered their babies. It is also a good way for people in the Brooklyn community who are Facebook members to join and become part of the Maimonides family and the outstanding care at Maimonides.

Find us at www.facebook.com/maimonides-medicalcenter.

TOWERS...

Continued from page 1

Hudson Companies' Principal David Kramer called the concerns misguided, as there is no plan to evict any tenants. "I think change can be scary to a lot of people," he said. "We are giving people the best deal in town."

The six-story buildings comprise a nine-structure complex with 188 units facing Warren, Baltic and Hicks Streets.

The buildings were constructed as part of a social experiment by White, who aimed to demonstrate that private developers could build decent housing for the working class and still make a profit, according to Francis Morrone, an architectural historian.

Given that history, the towers' path toward gentrification is "heavily ironic," Morrone said.

"But it's not something that hasn't been done numerous times before," he said, pointing to the Cherokee Apartments on the Upper East Side, once known as the Vanderbilt Model Tenements, a complex built for working-class families with at least one member ill with tuberculosis. A

petition to upgrade every lobby.

But resident Nina Rogoff said she'd only consider buying her apartment if the price is lowered and her building is fully renovated.

At a recent meeting, ten-

ants discussed advocating a bulk buying rate, and perhaps organizing in order to better negotiate.

"I'm looking to spend \$200,000, maybe [as high as] \$280,000," Rogoff said.

— with Tony Cella

THOMPY...

Continued from page 1

State Street Gourmet Deli on Third Avenue.

He was inside the store for about 30 seconds, but when he returned, Thompy was gone.

Thompy — short for Thompson — could not have freed himself and run off, Crawford-Phillips said, so someone must have untied the leash.

Concerned neighbors — and we, too — publicized the dog-mapping, and word spread quickly about Thompy's disappearance.

But all speculation ended on Saturday evening when a Red Hook woman said she was sure she saw one of her neighbors walking Thompy.

The funny thing was that this neighbor never had a dog until just a few days earlier, the tipster said.

"[The caller] was confident and the information was specific enough that I was going to get an answer," Crawford-Phillips said.

But he knew that meant a stake out.

Armed with a cup of coffee and a newspaper, he drove over to the spot where the caller had last seen Thompy at 7 a.m. on Sunday and sat in his car, scanning the street.

"He [the dog] was out from movies to know how it goes," he said.

But the wait paid off. Three-and-a-half hours

later, his heart almost leapt out of his chest; there was his beloved pooch padding down the street alongside his new "best friend."

Crawford-Phillips called 911 — he didn't want to get the cops involved earlier — for some backup when he approached Thompy's new charge, who said that he had bought the dog 10 days earlier for \$500 days, but couldn't identify who he had bought it from.

A quick visit to a nearby vet left nothing in doubt: Thompy's chip identified Crawford-Phillips as the canine's rightful owner.

Facing the truth, Thompy's new "owners" had no choice but to bid their farewell to the brown and tan cocker.

"They looked after Thompy pretty well," said Crawford-Phillips, who was ecstatic to have his dog back in his arms again.

The feeling, of course, was mutual.

"You could tell he was pleased to see me," Crawford-Phillips explained, adding that after a victory lap around their courtyard on State Street and a jump on the sofa, Thompy was safe at home with his family as if he had never left.

"It had been 12 days, we were losing hope a bit," said Crawford-Phillips, adding that he's never going to leave Thompy alone on the street again.

MONEY...

Continued from page 1

of his Pacific Street condo by the May 7 deadline imposed by the settlement.

While taking a break from packing, Goldstein said he was looking forward to some time away from the spotlight.

"I'll be moving on from this fight without losing sight of it," Goldstein said, adding, "Though the spotlight will move away from this project, the next phase will last longer

than the fight against it."

But Goldstein hinted that he would not be vanishing from public life. He said he remained committed to advocating for reform of New York's eminent domain laws, and said that he had casually considered running for elected office someday.

"I've thought about it," Goldstein said. "But this was a six- or seven-year political campaign."

LOVE...

Continued from page 1

ing faithfulness.

As romantic as they are, the locks are definitely against the rules. A sign on both ends of the pedestrian walkway reads, "Attachment of any sorts to this bridge structure shall not be allowed."

It's still unclear how vigilant the city is about enforcing that law, however. Some locks that date back to 2007 suggest that the Department of Transportation doesn't mind a little test-tampering on the bridge, but department officials said they see them. Those officials wouldn't confirm their stance on love.

On Monday, some happy European tourists said that they hope that the symbols of affection can turn the Roman tradition into a New

York one.

"The locks show a couple's bond," said Martin Zooners, from Amsterdam. "Why would you want to take them away? They're not hurting anybody."

Perhaps, but Italians have gotten a bit sick of the whole thing.

"Every couple that walks on the Ponte Milvio does it, all because of that movie," said Chiara Fiori, who lives near Rome and was reached on Monday. The locks cover every inch of available fencing on the Ponte Milvio, and now police are ticketing red-handed offenders. In fact, Italian authorities are so fed up with the "childish" act that there's now a law to allow couples to leave a lock, albeit virtually, on the bridge.

WALMART

Continued from page 1

of whom drive out of the city to shop at Walmart, according to Purnell.

"A few people mentioned that there would be a possibility of jobs here if Walmart came. The fact that they are non-union didn't even come into the conversation," said Purnell. "People are desperate for jobs and what is not on their top priority list is whether something is union or not."

And the fight over Walmart's supposedly low wages has changed now that the Bethlehem of Bethlehem is paying better.

According to the Walmart Web site, full-time workers at its stores in New York make an average of \$12.03 per hour, and the company contributes

four percent of workers pay to their combined Profit Sharing and 401k Plan.

For now, Walmart is not saying anything.

"We do not have a project to announce anywhere within the five boroughs of New York City," said Steven Restivo, Walmart director of community affairs. "However, we know that New Yorkers want to shop and work at Walmart and as a result, we continue to evaluate potential opportunities here."

Related spokesperson Joanna Rose said the company has not signed a single lease for Gateway II and there are no plans for construction at this time.

"The time line will be determined by tenant and financing commitments," Rose said.

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